

**Department of Education**  
**AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND**

**Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Request**

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## AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

For carrying out the Act of March 3, 1879, as amended (20 U.S.C. 101 et seq.),

\$24,600,000.

### NOTE

A regular 2011 appropriation for this account had not been enacted at the time the budget was prepared; therefore, this account is operating under a continuing resolution (P.L. 111-322, Dec. 22, 2010; 124 Stat 3518) that provides funding through March 4, 2011. The amounts included for fiscal year 2011 in this budget reflect the annualized levels provided by the continuing resolution.

**AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND**

**Amounts Available for Obligation**  
(\$000s)

	2010	2011 CR	2012
Discretionary appropriation:			
Appropriation .....	\$24,600	0	\$24,600
Annualized CR (PL 111-322).....	<u>0</u>	<u>\$24,600</u>	<u>0</u>
 Total, direct obligations.....	 24,600	 24,600	 24,600

**Obligations by Object Classification**  
(\$000s)

	2010	2011 CR	2012
Grants, subsidies, and contributions.....	\$24,600	\$24,600	\$24,600

AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

Authorizing Legislation  
(\$000s)

Activity	2011 Authorized	2011 CR	2012 Authorized	2012 Request
American Printing House for the Blind (20 U.S.C. 101 et seq.)	<u>Indefinite</u>	<u>\$24,600</u>	<u>Indefinite</u>	<u>\$24,600</u>
Total definite authorization	0		0	
Total appropriation		24,600		24,600

## AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

### Appropriations History (\$000s)

	Budget Estimate to Congress	House Allowance	Senate Allowance	Appropriation
2003	14,000	15,500	15,500	15,399
2004	14,000	16,500	16,500	16,403
2005	16,403	17,000	17,000	16,864
2006	16,864	17,000	18,500	17,573
2007	17,573	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	17,573 <sup>1</sup>
2008	17,573	17,573	22,000	21,616
2009	21,616	22,697 <sup>2</sup>	22,500 <sup>2</sup>	22,599
2010	22,599	22,599	24,600 <sup>3</sup>	24,600
2011	24,600	24,600 <sup>4</sup>	24,600 <sup>4</sup>	24,600 <sup>4</sup>
2012	24,600			

<sup>1</sup> This account operated under a full-year continuing resolution (P.L. 110-5). House and Senate allowance amounts are shown as N/A (Not Available) because neither body passed a separate appropriations bill.

<sup>2</sup> The levels for the House and Senate allowances reflect action on the regular annual 2009 appropriations bill, which proceeded in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress only through the House Subcommittee and the Senate Committee.

<sup>3</sup> The level for the Senate allowance reflects Committee action on the regular annual fiscal year 2010 appropriation bill, which proceeded in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress only through the Senate Committee.

<sup>4</sup> The level for the House allowance reflects the House-passed full-year continuing resolution. The level for the Senate allowance reflects Committee action only. The level for appropriation reflects the continuing resolution (P.L. 111-322) passed December 22, 2010.

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### American Printing House for the Blind

(Act to Promote the Education of the Blind, 20 U.S.C. 101 et seq.)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): Indefinite

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$24,600 <sup>1</sup>	\$24,600	0

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<sup>1</sup> Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4<sup>th</sup> Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Act to Promote the Education of the Blind authorizes an annual appropriation for the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) to produce and distribute educational materials adapted for students who are legally blind and enrolled in formal educational programs below the college level. The Printing House, located in Louisville, Kentucky, has received Federal support under this Act since 1879. Materials produced by APH include textbooks in braille and large type, educational tools such as braille typewriters and computer software and hardware, teaching aides, including tests and performance measures, and other special supplies. The materials are distributed, through allotments of funds to the States, to programs serving students who are blind. The allotments are based on an annual census conducted by APH of the number of students who are legally blind in each State and are provided in the form of credits. State educational agencies and programs serving persons who are blind may order materials free of charge up to the amount of funds allocated to each State for educational materials. Approximately 80 percent of the appropriation is used to cover the cost of operations to produce these materials. The Printing House uses the remainder of the appropriated funds to conduct research related to developing and improving products and to provide advisory services to professionals and consumer organizations on the availability and use of materials produced by APH.

The Printing House conducts research necessary to develop and improve educational materials in core curriculum areas such as science, mathematics, and social studies and adapts testing materials related to these subject areas. In addition, APH conducts research in product areas specific to the visually impaired population, such as braille reading, orientation and mobility, and assistive technology. Special materials are also developed for use in teaching students who are blind and blind students with additional disabilities and in areas such as early intervention and early childhood education, prevocational training, and the functional use of residual vision. Educational and Advisory Services are provided to consumers primarily through three departments: Field Services, Communications, and Resource Services. Examples of advisory services include administration of the Student Registration System, Louis Database of Accessible Materials, Electronic File Repository, and Expert Database; National Instructional Partnership activities; and production of a variety of communication vehicles, such as catalogs,

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brochures, videos, and a wide variety of web-based information. APH also convenes ad hoc expert advisory committees and focus groups to address specific issues, as necessary.

As of June 2010, APH had 205 Federal Quota accounts administered by 145 ex officio trustees who represent State educational agencies, schools for the blind, rehabilitation programs, and other agencies serving the blind in each State. The Quota accounts consist of funds from the appropriation that are allocated on the basis of the annual census of blind students to the ex officio trustees in the form of credits. Trustees may use the credits to order materials from APH. These materials are available for purchase by the trustees and the general public at <http://shop.aph.org>. The ex officio trustees are responsible for the administration of the Federal accounts in each State. Items to be produced and distributed by APH are reviewed and approved by a seven-member Educational Products Advisory Committee (EPAC). The purpose of this committee, made up of ex officio trustees, is to ensure that all educational materials produced and research undertaken by APH are effectively focused on meeting the needs of students who are blind. In addition, a second five-member advisory committee of ex officio trustees, the Educational Services Advisory Committee (ESAC), provides oversight and accountability regarding APH's outreach and support services.

The States are required to provide a free appropriate public education, including appropriate related materials and supplies, to all students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Materials provided through this appropriation supplement the various other resources available to the States to achieve this goal. In order to meet their responsibilities under the IDEA, many States make additional purchases from APH and other suppliers of materials for students who are visually impaired.

Funding provided through the Act for educational materials in fiscal year 2010 represented approximately 70 percent of the Printing House's total sales income of \$22.8 million. Total funding provided through the Act represented approximately 81 percent of its total budget of \$28.0 million. Federal grants and contracts from agencies such as the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped's Talking Book program represented about another 9 percent of APH's total budget for fiscal year 2010. The remaining 10 percent of APH's budget came from nongovernmental contracts and revenue from unsubsidized product sales to State and local agencies, direct sales to individuals who are blind, private sector contract sales, corporate and individual donations from the private sector, and interest income from endowments and other investments.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

	(\$000s)
2007 .....	\$17,573
2008 .....	21,616
2009 .....	22,599
2010 .....	24,600
2011 CR .....	24,600

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#### FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$24.6 million for activities to be conducted by the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) in fiscal year 2012. The request would maintain funding for APH at the fiscal year 2011 CR level. Over the past 10 fiscal years, from 2001 to 2011, funding for this program increased by \$12.6 million, or 105 percent. However, during the same years, the number of students estimated to be served by APH increased by only 2,304 or 5.3 percent. In light of these trends, the Administration believes the request provides sufficient resources to support a robust level of service in each of the three program areas: educational materials, advisory services, and research.

Educational Materials. The Administration's request includes \$19.6 million for educational materials, an amount level with funding for this area in fiscal year 2011. Excluding non-quota funds from the braille improvement project, the requested funding level provides an estimated \$319 per eligible student, a slight decrease from \$322 per student available in fiscal year 2011. The per student allotment would decrease while the total funding level would remain the same because of a slight increase in the number of students eligible to receive educational materials produced and distributed by APH. Materials produced by APH include textbooks in braille, large type, and audio recording formats; educational aides such as braille typewriters, raised (tactile) graphics, and computer software and hardware; teaching tools such as tests and performance measures; and other special supplies. APH manufactures these instructional materials for a broad range of academic subjects and grade levels. In fiscal year 2010, 940 educational products were available for purchase with Federal quota funds. Of these, 917 (97 percent) were purchased for use by eligible students. The materials produced and sold by the Printing House offer States an additional resource to assist them with providing a free appropriate public education, as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and to ensure that students who are visually impaired receive the accessible educational materials they need to succeed in school and prepare for careers.

The timely delivery of textbooks in accessible media formats for braille-reading students is crucial to ensuring that children who are blind have the same access to a free appropriate public education as their non-disabled peers. In order to address this need, APH produces thousands of braille and large print textbooks each year on demand, including instructional materials featuring tactile graphics. APH publishes industry standards for tactile graphics, manufactures and distributes them to students across the country, and maintains a Tactile Graphic Image Library in order to increase the variety and lower the cost of pictures and graphics included in educational materials. Tactile graphics are particularly essential for teaching subjects such as geography and geometry. The funds requested for educational materials support APH's production of teaching modules and associated instructional materials in these subjects.

The request for educational materials will provide \$350,000 for the Braille Textbook Improvement Project to increase the number of textbooks available in braille and to improve the infrastructure necessary to facilitate braille production processes throughout the United States. The request also includes \$1.5 million for the Accessible Textbook Initiative. The goal of the Initiative is to quickly deliver custom-produced accessible textbooks in a variety of media.

Advisory Services. The Administration requests \$1.5 million for Advisory Services for fiscal year 2012. This amount is the same as the level for fiscal year 2011. Advisory Services include a



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variety of activities that support the ex-officio trustees' administration of the Educational Materials program area. These funds provide for the annual meeting of the ex-officio trustees, advisory group meetings, the annual census of students who are blind, printing and distribution of catalogs of available materials, and field services such as consultation, in-service training, and workshops. Staff in the Advisory Services area provide ongoing consumer information and technical support to customers and establish and maintain communication with APH's network of ex-officio trustees. These trustees are responsible for the administration of the Federal account in each State. APH also provides support and information to staff and teachers at the local level. In order to maximize the availability of its training and technical assistance activities, APH also provides training through the internet. These web-based training sessions have given the Printing House the ability to reach a wide audience of those who want information and training in an efficient, low-cost manner.

Projects that would continue to be funded in fiscal year 2012 include the National Instructional Partnerships program, Homegrown video product training series, Expert Database and Weblog, APH Research Library, APH Web Site, Accessible Media Producers Database, and Collaborative Instructional Partnership with Teacher Training Programs. The APH website offers convenient on-line ordering of products, demonstration copies of APH software, downloadable catalogs and newsletters, information on training events, online surveys, and online services such as the Louis Database and APH file repository. APH also has created a database of accessible media producers who can produce specialized versions of texts and convert NIMAS files into accessible formats. The request provides sufficient funds to cover all advisory services activities the Printing House plans to conduct in fiscal year 2012.

Research & Product Development. The Administration's request for research in fiscal year 2012 is \$3.5 million, which is level with amount allocated for research in fiscal year 2011. APH undertakes applied and developmental research with the goal of developing innovative educational products for students who are blind or have low-vision. Major research initiatives include developing a full-page refreshable braille/tactile graphic display and a pedestrian-focused navigation system for visually impaired students. The refreshable braille display is an electronic tool that enables blind students to independently access information provided through charts, graphs, and pictorially presented data. The navigation system will utilize global positioning system (GPS) technology and other technologies to facilitate both outdoor and indoor independent travel.

The Department recognizes the need for APH to conduct developmental and applied research, so that it can continue to meet the changing needs of students who are blind and visually impaired, particularly as the technologies for making education materials accessible evolve rapidly. The request will provide sufficient funds for APH to conduct over 30 research projects in a wide range of content areas, including development of new products for use with infants and toddlers, preschoolers, and school-aged children who are visually impaired, materials for students who are visually impaired with secondary disabilities, equipment and other materials to assist students with low vision, materials for learning braille, classroom learning materials, tactile graphics, and tools to aid in the transition from school to postsecondary educational or job settings.

In fiscal year 2009, APH released a redesign of the Perkins Braille, a typewriter for individuals who are blind that is used to create braille materials. The new Perkins-APH Braille is quieter,

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lighter, and more comfortable to use than the old model. It includes functions such as a built-in eraser, a way to read the page easily while writing, a shorter keystroke that requires less force, and margin guides on the front. Two examples of products developed by APH are Early Braille Trade Books and the Light Box. Early Trade Books combine commercially available books with braille labels for beginning readers. The Light Box is a tool developed as an instructional aid for children who still have some sight. In fiscal year 2009, APH produced a digital version of the Light Box that can be used in conjunction with computer programs to provide extension activities for the Light Box and/or provide familiar images for children who transition from Light Box to computer activities.

Product development activities planned for fiscal year 2012 are categorized into eleven content areas: Adult Life, Braille, Core Curriculum, Cortical Visual Impairment, Early Childhood, Emergent Literacy, Low Vision, Multiple Disabilities, Tactile Graphics, Technology, and Tests & Assessments. The request includes \$275,000 for APH's Accessible Testing Program, which is the same as the amount allocated for this program area in fiscal year 2011. The goals of this initiative are to:

- Provide tests, practice tests, test administration manuals, and other test-related materials, including full-color large print assessments, in high quality accessible media in a timely manner.
- Promote the inclusion of blind and visually impaired individuals during the development of assessments.
- Enhance the test performance of blind and visually impaired individuals through research, education, and communication.

### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2010</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>2011 CR</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>2012</u> <sup>1</sup>
<u>Distribution of funding:</u>			
Educational materials	\$19,000	\$19,600	\$19,600
Advisory services	1,600	1,500	1,500
Educational and technical research	<u>4,000</u>	<u>3,500</u>	<u>3,500</u>
Total	24,600	24,600	24,600
<u>Services &amp; products provided:</u>			
Number of eligible students	59,341	59,825	60,350
Average per student allotment (whole dollars)	\$312 <sup>2</sup>	\$322 <sup>2</sup>	\$319 <sup>2</sup>
Products available with Federal funds	940	947	955
Products purchased with Federal funds	917	919	926
Advisory committee meetings	5	5	5
State educational agencies visited	19	10	12
Residential programs visited	10	15	15
Rehabilitation programs visited	5	5	7

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#### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (cont.)

	<u>2010<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>2011 CR<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>2012<sup>1</sup></u>
In-service training programs and webcasts	27	20	20
Product training presentations and exhibits	155	115	115
Visits with Ex Officio Trustees	16	12	12
Total employees (full-time equiv.)	295	305	315

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<sup>1</sup> The figures for fiscal years 2010 are actual data. The figures for fiscal years 2011 and 2012 are the best available estimates from APH. For comparison purposes, the figures displayed reflect the original allocation of the appropriation and do not include subsequent reallocations of unused funds. The amounts displayed for fiscal year 2010 do not include unused funds of \$2,702,904 from Educational Aids, \$240,000 from Research, and \$75,000 from Advisory services. These funds were reallocated from fiscal year 2009 to fiscal year 2010, which resulted in an additional \$14.60 per student in fiscal year 2010. Within fiscal year 2010, APH reallocated \$851,600 from Research, \$72,200 from the Braille Textbook Improvement Project, and \$16,500 from Advisory Services. These unused funds were reallocated to Educational Materials in 2010, which resulted in an additional \$18.49 per student.

<sup>2</sup> Funds used for the Braille Textbook Improvement Project support planning committees, focus groups, and team meetings/workgroups related to the improvement of braille materials provided by APH. As such, the project is shown under Educational Materials. However, these funds are not included as part of the calculation of the average per student allotment because they are not directly available to ex officio trustees for purchasing educational products for eligible students. The funds for the Accessible Textbook Initiative are included as part of the calculation of the per student share.

#### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

##### Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, performance targets, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years, those requested in fiscal year 2012 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

APH has been reporting data from customer satisfaction surveys for several years. The survey results indicate that the educational materials provided through the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind are appropriate, timely, high quality, and allow students who are visually impaired to benefit more fully from their educational programs. However, the Department expressed concerns for several years that the data are subjective in nature and do not provide sufficient information on key outcomes. The Department and the Printing House worked together to develop more objective, appropriate measures of outcomes for APH activities and introduced several new measures in fiscal year 2007. In fiscal year 2009, the Department and APH reviewed the six measures that use survey data to determine whether they should be improved or deleted. Based on this review, the Department revised four of the six and eliminated the other two in fiscal year 2010. These changes ensure that the survey-based measures gather information only on customer satisfaction and do not attempt to draw conclusions about student outcomes that cannot be supported by customer satisfaction data.

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**Goal:** Pre-college level blind students will receive appropriate educational materials that result in improved educational outcomes.

**Objective:** Appropriate, timely, high-quality educational materials are provided to pre-college level blind students to allow them to benefit more fully from their educational programs.

**Measure:** The percentage of American Printing House for the Blind trustees, advisory committee members, consumers, and teachers who agree that the educational materials provided through the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind are appropriate, timely, and high quality.

#### Trustees-Percentage who agree

Year	Target	Actual
2007	98	100
2008	98	100
2009	98	99
2010	98	100
2011	98	
2012	98	

#### Advisory Committee Members-Percentage who agree

Year	Target	Actual
2007	100	100
2008	100	100
2009	100	98
2010	100	100
2011	100	
2012	100	

#### Consumers-Percentage who agree

Year	Target	Actual
2007	96	99
2008	96	99
2009	96	99
2010	96	98
2011	96	
2012	96	

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<i>Teachers - Percentage who agree</i>		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	97	99
2008	97	99
2009	97	98
2010	97	98
2011	97	
2012	97	

**Additional Information:** APH gathered the data for these measures by administering an online survey to 587 respondents in fiscal year 2010. An external research firm assisted with the design of the survey. The Department believes that a survey instrument is an appropriate vehicle to obtain data on consumer satisfaction with products, including whether the educational materials provided through the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind are appropriate to the consumer's needs, delivered in a timely manner, and of high quality. However, the same survey is not appropriate for measuring outcomes, such as whether blind students benefit more fully from their educational programs because of these products. A rigorous evaluation would be necessary to determine whether students are making progress and the extent to which that progress is attributable to the availability of these materials.

Therefore, in fiscal year 2010 the Department has revised these measures to exclude what was formerly the last phrase of the measures ("...and allow blind students to benefit more fully from their educational programs"). The rest of the text of these measures remains unchanged.

**Objective:** *To improve the quality of APH research and increase product usefulness*

<b>Measure:</b> The percentage of APH products sold that are new products.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	12	22
2008	12	27
2009	15	27
2010	15	35
2011	15	
2012	15	

**Additional Information:** This measure was developed to help determine the efficacy of new products developed by APH. The purpose of the measure is to evaluate the reaction of consumers to new products created by the APH research department and introduced by the Printing House, which is determined by measuring the extent to which sales of new products surpass a minimum level of products sold. This measure is based on an examination of sales data reported by the Printing House. The targets represent the minimum level of new product sales that should be achieved to ensure that the products developed by APH reflect consumer needs. APH established an initial target of 12 percent based upon performance trends and an analysis of the average percentage that new products represented of all products offered by

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APH from fiscal year 2001 through 2004. We increased the target for fiscal years 2009 and subsequent years based on the additional data provided for fiscal years 2007 and 2008. In fiscal year 2010, the Printing House exceeded the minimum level established as the target. Data for fiscal year 2011 will be available in October 2011.

**Measure:** The average rating, according to approved criteria on relevance, for a sample of new American Printing House for the Blind products evaluated by an independent panel of qualified experts or individuals with appropriate expertise related to the target audience.

Year	Target	Actual
2007		4.1
2008		4.5
2009		4.2
2010	4	4.7
2011	4	
2012	4	

**Additional Information:** For this measure and the following two measures, the Printing House held its first year of panel review in fiscal 2007. To determine the average relevance rating, a panel of seven experts, who are proposed by APH and approved by the Department, reviews a random sample of new products developed each year by the Printing House to assess whether: (1) there is evidence of need for the product; (2) there is evidence that APH sought the opinions of knowledgeable individuals on the need for the product; (3) APH made the decision to produce the product based on a standardized process for product selection; (4) the product addresses an identified need for individuals who are visually impaired; and (5) the product is fully accessible for the intended population. The products are rated using a 7-point rating scale, where 1 equals "does not meet criteria, 4 equals "meets criteria," and 7 equals "exceeds criteria." The mean of the scores is the number reported in the actual column. In fiscal 2010, the panel's mean rating continued to exceed the "meets criteria" rating and increased slightly as compared to the prior year. The small variations in the average score from year to year may reflect the changing composition of the expert review panel and the sample of the products rated. We expect to obtain data for fiscal year 2011 in October 2011.

**Measure:** The average rating, according to approved criteria on quality of research, for a sample of new American Printing House for the Blind products evaluated by an independent panel of qualified experts or individuals with appropriate expertise related to the target audience.

Year	Target	Actual
2007		3.7
2008		4
2009		3.7
2010	4	4.3
2011	4	
2012	4	

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**Additional Information:** The panel of seven experts annually reviews a random sample of new products developed each year by APH to assess whether: (1) appropriate research methodologies are being used consistent with the type of product being developed; (2) data are gathered from a geographically diverse U.S. population and a variety of potential user groups; (3) evaluation data are gathered from appropriately qualified individuals; (4) development demonstrates use of field-reviewed data for modification to the product prior to final development; and (6) data are gathered on student and consumer outcomes related to the use of the proposed product. The products are rated using a 7-point rating scale, where 1 equals “does not meet criteria, 4 equals “meets criteria,” and 7 equals “exceeds criteria.” The mean of the scores is the number reported.

The average of the scores was just below the “meets criteria” rating in fiscal year 2009. However, in fiscal year 2010 the average rating exceeded the “meets criteria” rating. The panel members identified two concerns that could affect the quality review: (1) criteria were difficult to apply because of the diversity of products produced by APH; and (2) the need for additional research and empirical data to support product development decisions. Data for fiscal year 2011 will be available in October 2011.

<b>Measure:</b> The average rating, according to approved criteria on utility, for a sample of new American Printing House for the Blind products evaluated by an independent panel of qualified experts or individuals with appropriate expertise related to the target audience.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007		4.4
2008		4.5
2009		4.4
2010	4	5
2011	4	
2012	4	

**Additional Information:** For this measure, a panel of seven experts annually reviews a random sample of new products developed by APH to assess whether: (1) sales of the new products indicate demand; (2) new product indicators, such as field evaluations and other feedback, substantiate that the new product is meeting a need; and (3) the products are considered highly useful for individuals with visual impairments. The products are rated using a 7-point rating scale, where 1 equals “does not meet criteria, 4 equals “meets criteria,” and 7 equals “exceeds criteria.” The mean of the scores is the number reported. In fiscal 2010, the average of the scores increased and clearly exceeded the targeted “meets criteria” rating, indicating that the utility of APH products is generally high. The Department expects to receive new data for this measure in October 2011.

### Efficiency Measures

The Department worked closely with the Printing House to develop appropriate efficiency measures for the Federal program at APH.

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<b>Measure:</b> The cost (in cents) per page to produce color large type textbooks.		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>2007</b>	14.21	14.74
<b>2008</b>	13.92	11.3
<b>2009</b>	13.63	11.5
<b>2010</b>	13.34	9.9
<b>2011</b>	13.05	
<b>2012</b>	13.05	

**Additional Information:** The cost per page was well below the target. Since fiscal year 2007, APH has reduced the cost per page by 33 percent. A number of factors affect the cost per page, including cost of raw materials, demand for products, and efficiency of operations. Compared to fiscal year 2009, the number of pages produced increased by 12.6 percent while production costs decreased by 2.6 percent in fiscal 2010, yielding a significant decrease in the cost per page. Large print materials constitute approximately 25 percent of APH total sales. The Department anticipates receiving data for fiscal year 2011 in October 2011.

<b>Measure:</b> The cost (in cents) per page to produce braille textbooks.		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>2007</b>	9.31	11.1
<b>2008</b>	9.12	9.97
<b>2009</b>	8.93	10.3
<b>2010</b>	8.74	10.4
<b>2011</b>	8.55	
<b>2012</b>	8.55	

**Additional Information:** In fiscal year 2010, the cost per page slightly increased and APH did not meet the target, although the cost of producing braille was lower than in fiscal year 2007. APH noted that the numbers of braille pages produced, based on consumer demand, are not directly under its control, but affect the cost per page. For example, demand for braille jumped by 22.3 percent in fiscal 2010 while the associated production expenses increased by 17.9 percent. APH reports that it will reevaluate its braille production expenses to look for ways to improve efficiency. Braille materials represent approximately 15 percent of APH total sales. The Department expects to receive data for fiscal year 2011 in October 2011.

### Other Performance Information

The Department conducted an on-site monitoring visit to APH from March 9 – 10, 2009. The purpose of the visit was to examine compliance with applicable requirements, use of Federal funds, quality of Government Performance and Results Act and other program data, and the performance of selected programs. This included an assessment of APH's strategic planning process. This review was conducted as part of the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of APH programs and administrative operations funded by the annual Federal appropriation.



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### American Printing House for the Blind

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During the on-site monitoring visit, we looked at how APH determines which materials to braille and priorities for new products. The Printing House explained that each year the Educational Products Advisory Committee (EPAC) reviews proposed new products and discusses emerging technologies, trends in education theories, policies, curricula, and standards, and future assistive technology needs. The Printing House develops a three-year plan for each proposed product, which outlines the process for the product's development, production, testing, and dissemination. EPAC members provide in-depth feedback on the proposed products, and after prototypes of the new products have been developed, professionals and students conduct field-testing on the prototypes. APH considers the three-year plan for each product to be part of the institution's overall strategic plan. The Printing House also stated that it contacted the Center for Non-Profit Excellence to take advantage of their expertise in the planning of product development.

In addition, APH refers back to the 1997 Strategic Plan to monitor its progress in serving its consumers.<sup>1</sup> APH reported during the March 2009 monitoring visit, that it continuously "scans the environment" to keep abreast of emerging production and materials technologies, by: (1) researching the Internet; (2) participating in listservs and Webinars; (3) subscribing to trade publications; and (4) joining industry organizations, such as Screen Graphics Images Association, Printing Industries of America, Modelmakers Internet List Exchange, and Digital Accessible Information System (DAISY). APH asserted that its vendors are the best source of information on emerging technologies, as APH purchases over 25,000 different parts for manufacturing products. These vendors keep APH current on new equipment, technologies, and materials and with this information, APH stated that it is able to integrate the new production and materials technologies into its products.

The Department continues to be interested in APH's efforts to stay up-to-date with developments in electronic text and printing technologies; changes in teaching methods; new curriculum standards and requirements; and future assistive technology needs, including the impact these technologies, methods, and standards have on APH's ability to meet the needs of students who are blind and visually impaired for accessible instructional materials. The Department recommended that APH identify specific technologies that may be of benefit to students who are blind or visually impaired and set priorities for development of these technologies, when updating its Strategic Plan. With identified priorities, APH will be able to set aside appropriate resources to support those efforts, and its administrators will be able to make decisions aligned with its goals and objectives. The next on-site monitoring visit is scheduled for March, 2011.

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<sup>1</sup> The 1997 Strategic Plan includes eight objectives: (1) Ninety percent of items ordered will be shipped on or before the promised ship date; (2) Increase the dollar sales by distribution channel over those for the previous year; (3) Increase the number of sales outlets from the previous year; (4) Seventy-five percent of the timelines for new product development will be met; (5) Increase the number of new products introduced; (6) Increase the total unit sales of a mix of new products; (7) Increase total dollar sales from the previous year; and (8) Reduce the percentage of sales returned for credit or repair from the previous year.